

February 28, 2003

Dear Wolford Mountain Reservoir Stakeholder:

The Colorado River Water Conservation District (River District) is evaluating the feasibility of a small hydroelectric power project at the existing Ritschard Dam at Wolford Mountain Reservoir near the Town of Kremmling, Colorado. The proposed facility would be a modest project, generating enough electricity to meet the needs of approximately 350 households in western Colorado. As someone with an interest in the operations of the reservoir, your input is invaluable.

The River District owns and operates the dam and reservoir. The reservoir is a “multi-purpose” water supply serving human and environmental needs. The hydroelectric project would take advantage of the reservoir’s normal water supply operations and bypass flows to generate energy. The project would add generation of renewable energy to the reservoir’s other beneficial uses.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulates hydroelectric projects. The River District must apply for and obtain a license or license exemption from FERC before the hydroelectric project can be operated. To obtain a FERC license or license exemption, project proponents can use either a “traditional” or an “alternative” licensing procedure. The “traditional” procedure is a multi-step process that is mainly executed by the FERC. The alternative procedure emphasizes early consultations between the applicant, government agencies, and the public to identify and resolve issues. The River District prefers the alternative procedure because it provides more opportunity to work with interested stakeholders.

To proceed with the alternative procedure, the River District must develop a “communications protocol” and determine if there is a consensus among stakeholders that the alternative procedure is appropriate for this project. We invite and encourage your participation in this “first step.”

Enclosed are three attachments to help explain the alternative procedure:

- FERC’s flowchart, Licensing/Exemption Process-Alternative Approach,
- Draft Communications Protocol, and
- Project distribution list.

The flowchart outlines the alternative procedure. As you can see, we are just starting a multi-step process.

The communications protocol provides guidance for maintaining communications among the stakeholders during the process. The protocol details where project files will be kept, how meetings will be announced, and how written and oral communications among the stakeholders will proceed. **At the end of the protocol is a simple comment/response form. Please take the time to comment on the protocol and let us know the extent to which you would like to be involved in the process.**

We will take comments and questions at any time, but to incorporate comments into the communications protocol, we need to receive them before March 31, 2003. You can use the enclosed form, write a letter, or contact Jim Pearce at 970-945-8522 or [jpearce@crwcd.org](mailto:jpearce@crwcd.org). If there is a consensus among respondents that the alternative procedure is appropriate, we will seek FERC's approval to use this procedure.

Thank you for your time. We hope that you will participate with us in the proposed project and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

James F. Pearce, P.E.  
Project Manager

Enclosures:

Draft Communications Protocol  
FERC ALP flowchart  
Response Form  
Distribution List

**Communications Protocol**  
**Ritschard Dam Unit Water Power Project**  
**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project Number 11880-000**  
**February 7, 2003**

**Introduction**

The Colorado River Water Conservation District (River District) is a political subdivision of the State of Colorado in Western Colorado. Formed by the State's General Assembly in 1937, the statutory mission of the River District is to protect and develop the water resources of the Colorado River within Colorado. The River District, acting by and through its Colorado River Water Projects Enterprise, has obtained a preliminary permit (Proj. No. 11880-000) and is evaluating the feasibility of a small hydroelectric power project at the existing Ritschard Dam (Wolford Mountain Reservoir) near the Town of Kremmling, Colorado.

To construct and operate the hydroelectric project, the District must obtain a license or license exemption from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC regulations allow the project proponent to use either the "traditional" or the "alternative licensing procedure" (ALP) to prepare and submit a license or license exemption application. The River District would like to use the alternative procedure to pursue FERC authorization for the Ritschard Dam project.

To use the alternative procedure, the River District must get approval from FERC. A consensus among stakeholders that the ALP is appropriate for the project is the Commission's primary consideration in granting an approval. This draft communications protocol is the River District's first step in soliciting input from interested stakeholders regarding the alternative licensing procedure.

The communications protocol will provide a guideline for communications and coordination on the proposed project during the licensing/exemption process. As required, the protocol details where project files will be kept, how meetings will be announced, and how written and oral communications among the stakeholders will proceed. The intent of the communications protocol is to ensure that all project information is conveyed to interested entities in a regular and predictable manner.

**Communications Procedures**

- A. **Public Reference Files.** There will be three public reference files for this project.

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201 Centennial Street, Suite 200  
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

Colorado River Water Conservation District  
Wolford Reservoir Project Office  
27219 US Highway 40  
Kremmling, CO 80459

Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20426

B. **Public Meetings.** The following procedures shall be used to notify the public of any public meetings that are held for purposes of scoping the issues to be addressed in the draft environmental assessment for the project or to receive comments and recommendations on terms and conditions to be included in any license or exemption for the project:

- The River District will publish notification of the meeting in the Grand County Tribune, the Glenwood Springs Post Independent, and the Denver Post at least two weeks prior to the meeting date,
- The River District will post notification of the meeting on the internet at <http://www.crwcd.org> (under hydropower permitting),
- The River District will serve written or email notification of the meeting to all interested entities who request such notice, and
- The Commission may, at its option, notice the meetings in the Federal Register, at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.

C. **Notices.** The following procedures will be used to notify the public and all interested entities of the availability of the preliminary draft environmental assessment:

- The River District will publish notification of the document's availability in the Grand County Tribune, the Glenwood Springs Post Independent, and the Denver Post,
- The River District will post notification on the internet at <http://www.crwcd.org> (under hydropower permitting),
- The River District will serve written or email notification to all interested entities who request such notice, and
- The Commission will notice the document's availability in the Federal Register.

- D. **Coordination Meetings.** Meetings to coordinate the preparation of the preliminary draft environmental assessment (PDEA) will occur on an “as needed” basis. All persons, agencies and organizations that have indicated a desire to participate in coordinating preparation of the PDEA will be notified of the meeting in writing (by mail, fax or e-mail) at least 14 days prior to the meeting. Minutes of coordination meetings will be taken and placed in the public reference files.
- E. **Teleconference Calls.** Teleconference calls to coordinate the preparation of the preliminary draft environmental assessment will occur on an “as needed” basis. Minutes of teleconference calls will be taken and placed in the public reference files.
- F. **Written Communications.** All written communications that are appropriate for inclusion in the public record shall be placed in the public reference files (e.g., comments, letters, meeting minutes, and progress reports).
- G. **Communications With FERC Staff.** Prior to the River District’s submission of a PDEA to the Commission, any participant may communicate with FERC hydroelectric project review staff at any time regarding the proposed project without triggering the Commission’s *ex parte* communication rules (18 C.F.R. 385.2201). All written communications with the Commission shall be made part of the public record and maintained in the public reference files described in paragraph A above. The Commission staff may use its discretion to determine whether the substance of any oral communication it has with a participant should be memorialized in a written summary and placed in the public record. After the River District files its PDEA, the Commission’s *ex parte* rules will apply if the proceeding becomes a “contested on-the-record proceeding” as defined in 18 C.F.R. 2201(c).
- H. **Six Month Progress Reports.** Following the Commission’s authorization to use the ALP process and every six months thereafter, the River District will file a progress report with the Commission pursuant to section 4.34(i)(6)(ii) of the Commission’s regulations (18 C.F.R. 4.34(i)(6)(ii)). The report will summarize activities under the process. These reports will also be published “on-line” at the River District’s hydropower permitting web page.

**Comment Form  
Communications Protocol  
and the Alternative Licensing Procedure  
Ritschard Dam Unit Water Power Project  
FERC Project Number 11880-000**

Please take a few minutes to complete this form and mail it back to the River District using the enclosed self addressed and stamped envelope. Please use additional pages if you need more space for your comments.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate what you feel your level of interest and involvement will be in this project:  
(0 = none, 5 = high)

0

1

2

3

4

5

Please provide your comments and suggestions on the draft Communications Protocol:

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(over)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that the alternative licensing procedure is appropriate for this project?

YES

NO

MAYBE

If No or Maybe, please explain.

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Do you have questions regarding the project? Would you like the River District to contact you? If so, please indicate below:

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## GLOSSARY:

**NEPA** - National Environmental Policy Act

**PDNEPA** - Preliminary Draft NEPA

**DNEPA** - Draft NEPA

**AIR** - Additional Information Request

**BLM** - Bureau of Land Management

**EOT** - Extension of Time

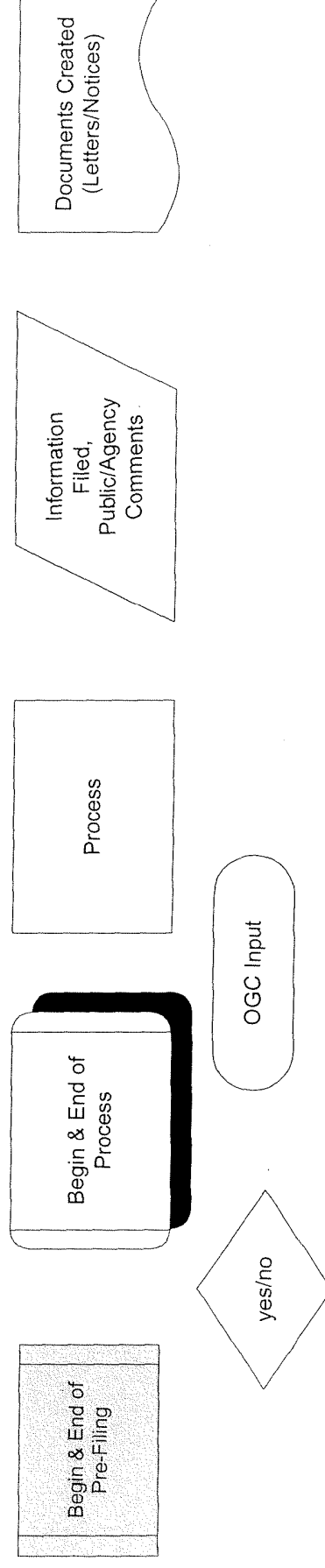
**EA** - Environmental Assessment

**DEA** - Draft EA

**EIS** - Environmental Impact Statement

**DEIS** - Draft EIS

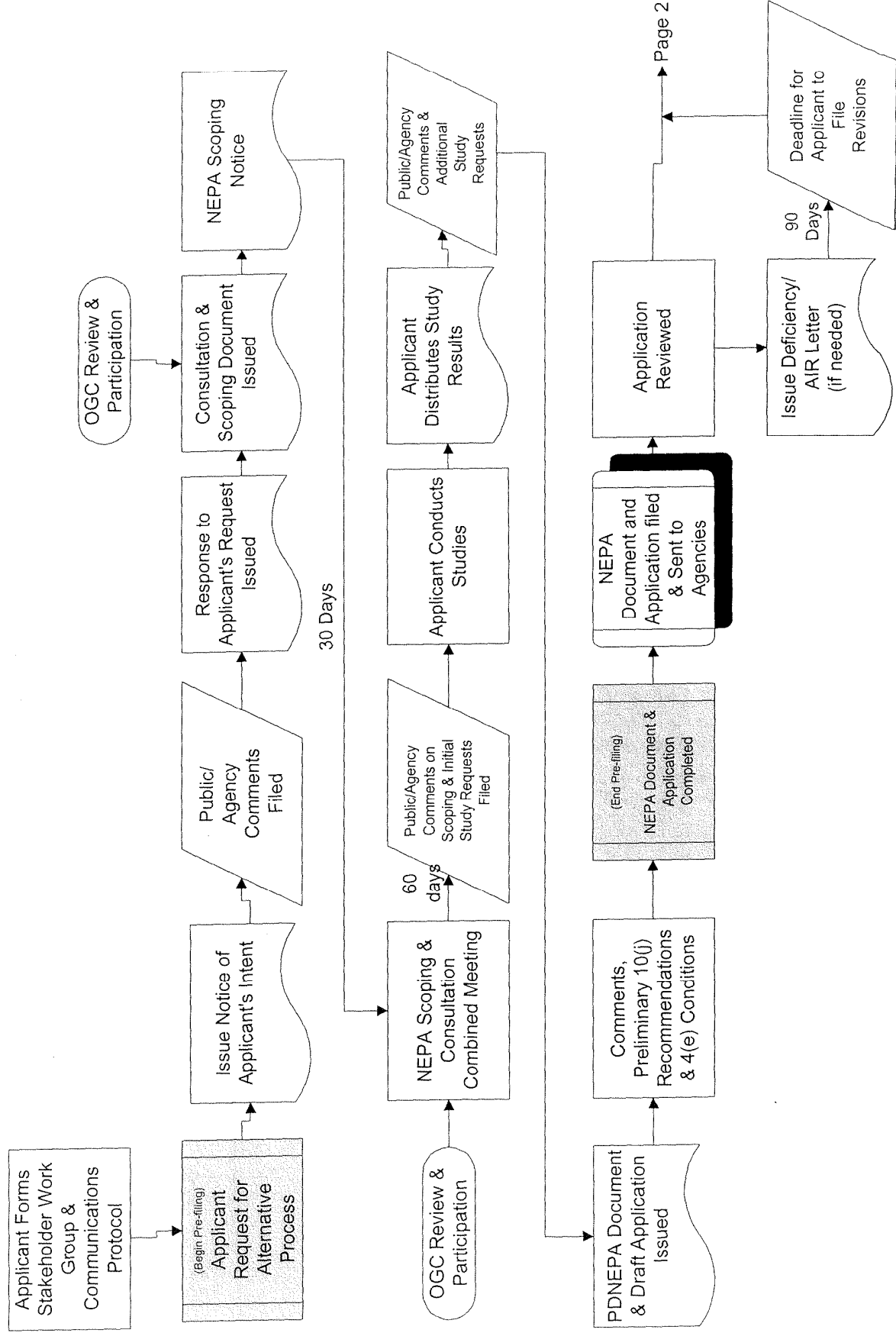
**Headwater Benefits** - Additional Electric Generation at a Downstream Hydro Project Resulting from Flow Regulation by a Headwater, or Upstream Project.





# Licensing/Exemption Process - Alternative Approach

January 13, 1998



**Comment Form**  
**Communications Protocol**  
**and the Alternative Licensing Procedure**  
***Ritschard Dam Unit Water Power Project***  
**FERC Project Number 11880-000**

Please take a few minutes to complete this form and mail it back to the River District using the enclosed self addressed and stamped envelop. Please use additional pages if you need more space for your comments.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate what you feel your level of interest and involvement will be in this project:  
(0 = none, 5 = high)

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Please provide your comments and suggestions on the draft Communications Protocol:

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(over)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that the alternative licensing procedure is appropriate for this project?

YES

NO

MAYBE

If No or Maybe, please explain.

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Do you have questions regarding the project? Would you like the River District to contact you? If so, please indicate below:

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